

LBC 67-0010

24 February 1967

MEMORANDUM

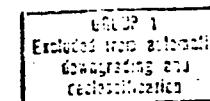
SUBJECT: Estimate of Damage Which Could Accrue to CIA
Miami Through Prosecution of the Rolando
Masferrer Haitian Invasion Group

1. The decision by the Justice Department to seek a Grand Jury indictment against Rolando Masferrer and certain of his associates is a potentially explosive matter which could result in extensive damage to CIA activities in Miami. Recent adverse publicity on the national scene and in the Miami area have added substantially to the already sizeable embarrassment potential. Some of the main sectors of danger to CIA equities are described below.

2. Basic national publicity regarding student and foundation topics have already attracted attention of the local press to the CIA in general. Usually any reference to CIA covert activities leads the press to check files for references to any such activities locally. However, before this action could be taken, the story regarding the Pan American Foundation and the University of Miami broke, and the press immediately concentrated on this topic. The CIA Chief of Station learned through personal press contacts that this was partly a matter of luck and partly because of the friendly and cooperative attitude of those press contacts. Although several editorials highly critical of CIA have been published and the replay of wire service stories has been given much space, as yet there has been no local follow-up aimed at putting CIA or the CIA Station on the spot. However, the situation remains delicate, since, even with much good will, local newsmen cannot afford to let themselves be scooped by outsiders concerning stories in their own back yard.

3. Any new story, such as the 22 February story in World Journal Tribune on suspected CIA connection with recruitment of Cuban pilots for the Congo, the possible results of inquiry made on 21 February by three students connected with the University of Miami newspaper The Hurricane, or further revelations concerning the Pan American Foundation, could easily trigger publicity with an inevitable focus on the South Campus of the University of Miami and on the Miami Station cover firm.

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06/08 4. As has been the case for the past six years,
Mr. Henry King Stanford, President, and Dr. Eugene Cohen,
Vice President and Treasurer of the University of Miami,) 29
06/08 have extended their fullest cooperation concerning the
Miami Station and overall CIA interests and it is antic-
ipated they will continue to do so. However, we believe
there is a practical limit to the amount of pressure they
could stand from (their trustees) and from certain public
quarters if there is a flood of publicity regarding CIA
activities allegedly centered in or controlled from the
Zenith Technical Enterprises Inc.), or its accused suc-
cessor, the (Holmar Corporation). If such a situation arises,
it is conceivable that Mr. Stanford would feel impelled
to take some action aimed at disassociating the University 29
of Miami) from any contact with the (Holmar Corporation.) 29
Since the (Holmar Corporation) is ostensibly the tenant of
the (University of Miami) although on Federal property,
the resulting action might involve a request for the
termination of the tenancy agreement.

5. Even if the above circumstances did not exist, we
would remain concerned regarding the possible effects of
the prosecution of the Masferrer group. Although no
Station agents or persons with whom the Miami Station
has contractual arrangements are among the persons arrested
or those who will be prosecuted, it will be very easy for
the defense to drag CIA Miami into the case. The defense
has only to obtain testimony (true or perjured) from one
of the defendants, or to summon as defense witness one or
more disaffected former agents of the CIA Station, in
order to begin a chain reaction surfacing much detail
and rumor concerning CIA operations against the Cuban
target. Given the sizeable reduction of infiltration
and Covert Action agents during the past year, a general
feeling of frustration and lack of support for Cuban
freedom attributed to passive U.S. policy and reduction
in CIA support in all sectors, the long standing animosity
of certain exile circles against U.S. Government, notably
CIA, and the evaluation that CIA now is the most vulnerable
of Federal Agencies confronting them, exiles will be
tempted to see an attack against CIA as accomplishing
several purposes, that is, gaining acquittal, blackening
CIA, and exerting pressure on the U.S. Government for a
policy change.

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